

Joan Mohr Samuels: Proud Native Plant Hugger



Name the nature organization, and you'll find Joan Mohr Samuels volunteering: Northern Indiana Citizens Helping Ecosystems Survive (NICHES); Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society (INPAWS); and Wednesdays in the Wild, a weekly natural resources educational program she cofounded. She also created the Remove Invasive Plants (RIP) Squad; founded Friends of Celery Bog; and compiles the *Native Roots* newsletter about natural resources and stewardship opportunities.

Joan's interest for ecology, conservation, and stewardship sparked after she met and married Steve, a Purdue professor. Upon moving from the Washington, DC area to join her new

husband in West Lafayette in 1997, she began taking classes at Purdue in the Biology Department and in the Forestry and Natural Resources Department. Joan, a Brooklyn, New York native, was able to find many volunteer opportunities in the Greater Lafayette area that matched her interests.

She has served on the Northern Indiana Citizens Helping Ecosystems Survive (NICHES) Land Trust Board for six years and also created their website. Joan helped found the West Central Chapter of the Indiana Native Plant and Wildflower Society and also served as vice president and program chair. The Wednesdays in the Wild natural history series, now beginning its 10th year of weekly programs, is planned and publicized by Joan.

Keeping her busy in the fall and spring, Joan continues to remain active in the Remove Invasive Plants (RIP) Squad by removing bush honeysuckle and garlic mustard in several area parks. In continuing her conservation efforts year-round, she is a key member of Friends of Celery Bog which educates citizens on the value of this local wetland and encourages citizens to protect this valuable resource. Joan also created and continues to publish Native Roots, a bi-monthly newsletter to promote natural history programs and stewardship opportunities in West Central Indiana.

In her free time, Joan enjoys traveling with her husband, keeping up with their four children and six grandchildren, weaving, habitat gardening, and her latest adventure—backyard beekeeping!

Thank you, Joan, for devoting so much of your time to share your love of natural resources with the community.